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E.O.11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: PFOR US VN
SUBJ: US/SRV TALKS: SECOND SESSION, MAY 4, 1977

REF: PARIS 13101

1. AT PHAN HIEN'S INVITATION, HOLBROOKE SPOKE FIRST
ON MORNING OF MAY 4. HE REVIEWED POSITION WE HAD
TABLED THE PREVIOUS DAY OFFERING TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS,
REMOVE OUR OBJECTION TO UN MEMBERSHIP, AND END THE
TRADE EMBARGO ONCE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS HAD BEEN
ESTABLISHED AND EMBASSIES SET UP. HE ALSO EXPRESSED
GRATITUDE FOR SRV COOPERATION ON MIA INFORMATION AND
SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 102339

STATED EXPECTATION THAT IT WOULD CONTINUE, SINCE SUCH
COOPERATION SO FAR HAD MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO
TABLE OUR PROPOSAL. HE THEN EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT
SHOULD WE TRY TO RESOLVE EVERY PROBLEM PRIOR TO
ESTABLISHING RELATIONS, IT WOULD BE A LONG TIME BEFORE
RELATIONS ARE NORMALIZED. HE ENDED BY ASKING FOR
SERIOUS CONSIDERATION OF OUR PROPOSALS.

2. HIEN BEGAN REPLY BY OBSERVING THAT THERE IS
UNANIMITY ON THE OBJECTIVE OF NORMAL RELATIONS BETWEEN

THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE NOTED HOLBROOKE'S REAFFIRMATION OF US DESIRE TO SOLVE ALL MATTERS LEFT BEHIND BY THE WAR AND TO REMOVE OBSTACLES ON THE WAY TO NORMALIZATION. HE THEN TURNED TO MIA PROBLEM AND REITERATED FACT THAT SRV HAS ALREADY TAKEN STEPS TO HELP HEAL THE "WOUNDS" WHICH THE US SUFFERED DURING THE WAR. HE SAID IT IS EQUALLY NECESSARY FOR THE US TO HELP HEAL THE WOUNDS OF WAR IN VIETNAM. USING THE METAPHOR OF TWO NEIGHBORS WHO HAVE CAUSED EACH OTHER HARM OVER A DISPUTE AND HAD DESTROYED EACH OTHER'S HOMES, HIEN POSITED THAT IT IS NECESSARY FOR BOTH OF THEM TO TAKE STEPS TO HELP THE OTHER REBUILD AS PART OF THE RECONCILIATION PROCESS. ALLUDING TO GLORIA EMERSON'S RECENT BOOK, "THE WINNERS AND LOSERS", HIEN EXPRESSED HIS REALIZATION OF THE EXTENT OF SUFFERING IN THE US. BUT HE ARGUED THE SUFFERING IN VIETNAM WAS ON A MUCH GREATER SCALE, WHICH LEADS TO THE MORAL QUESTION OF US ASSISTANCE IN POSTWAR RECONSTRUCTION.

3. TURNING TO NORMALIZATION, WHICH HE AGAIN EMPHASIZED WAS INTERRELATED WITH THE QUESTIONS OF AID AND MIAS, HIEN SUGGESTED A TWO PHASE PROCESS TOWARD RESOLVING THESE ISSUES. IN "PHASE A" VIETNAM HAD BEGUN STEPS TO RESOLVE THE MIA ISSUE. PHASE B WOULD INVOLVE THE BEGINNING OF THE PROCESS OF THE US CONTRIBUTION TO VIETNAMRECONSTRUCTION. THIS IN TURN WOULD "STIMULATE" SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 102339

THE SEEKING OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON MIAS. HE THEN ADDED THAT VIETNAM MIGHT STEP UP EVEN FURTHER THE SEEKING OF INFORMATION ON THESE MEN. ASKED WHETHER HE HAD SAID THE SRV "WOULD" STEP IT UP OR "MIGHT" STEP IT UP, HIEN RESTATED SENTENCE IN VIETNAMESE INDICATING THAT VIETNAM WOULD STEP UP ITS ACTIVITIES. HE WENT ON TO STATE THAT THIS SENTENCE MEANT THAT VIETNAMESE WOULD HAVE "FINISHED THE SEEKING OF INFORMATION ON AMERICAN MIAS IN VIETNAM." SINCE SOME UNCERTAINTY REMAINED, HIEN THEN REPEATED THE SENTENCE IN FRENCH IN WHICH HE SAID A US AID CONTRIBUTION IN PHASE B WOULD GIVE IMPETUS TO VIETNAMESE SEARCH FOR MIAS, ADDING THAT DURING THIS PHASE VIETNAM WOULD "IN ALL ESSENTIAL ASPECTS" HAVE COMPLETED THIS TASK.

4. HIEN THEN TURNED TO DETAILS OF AMERICAN AID PROGRAM AND AT THIS POINT MADE REFERENCE TO THE LIST OF COMMODITIES, MATERIALS AND OTHER ITEMS WHICH VIETNAM HAD INDICATED TO THE WOODCOCK COMMISSION WOULD BE NEEDED IN THE SHORT TERM AND OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. REFERRING TO THE LIST OF COMMODITIES, HE NOTED THE IDEA THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER NOT TO DISCUSS A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF MONEY, BUT RATHER TO LIST IN GENERAL THE ITEMS WHICH VIETNAM NEEDED. STRESSING THAT THERE ARE

MILLIONS OF VICTIMS OF WAR CURRENTLY IN VIETNAM, HIEN PROCEEDED TO READ INTO THE RECORD THE SAME LIST GIVEN WOODCOCK IN HANOI.

5. HIEN RESTATED THE TWO ADDITIONAL POINTS CONTAINED IN THE MEMO GIVEN TO THE WOODCOCK COMMISSION INDICATING THE SRV'S PREPAREDNESS TO HOLD TALKS WITH THE US ON LONG-TERM ECONOMIC RELATIONS INCLUDING AID AND LONG-TERM LOANS AS WELL AS TRADE RELATIONS AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION. HE THEN PARENTHETICALLY REAFFIRMED SRV'S WILLINGNESS TO CREATE FAVORABLE CONDITIONS FOR THE US TO PROVIDE SUCH AID.

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 102339

6. IN AN OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO EARLIER STATEMENTS BY HOLBROOKE REGARDING CONGRESSIONAL PROHIBITION OF DIRECT US AID, HIEN QUOTED A DOCUMENT FROM THE CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL POLICY WHICH GAVE TOTAL OF US AID FOR FY1976 AT 24.9 BILLION, REPEAT BILLION, DOLLARS, OF WHICH ONLY 7.7 BILLION (OR 31 PERCENT) WAS AUTHORIZED BY CONGRESS. HOLBROOKE INTERRUPTED HIEN'S PRESENTATION TO ASK FOR RESTATEMENT OF FIGURES AND THEN EXPRESSED CONCERN REGARDING DEFINITION OF US AID IN THIS DOCUMENT. HOLBROOKE PUT TOTAL US GRANT AID FOR THE YEAR AT AROUND TWO BILLION DOLLARS AND EXPRESSED CERTAINTY THAT NO MATTER HOW ONE COUNTED THE OTHER AMOUNTS OF MONEY, IT COULD NOT POSSIBLY APPROACH THE TOTAL HIEN HAD CITED. HIEN THEN MADE REFERENCE TO VIETNAMESE DISCUSSIONS WITH KISSINGER IN WHICH THE LATTER DISCUSSED MANY DIFFERENT FORMS OF AID, INCLUDING CONCESSIONAL AID WHICH THE VIETNAMESE UNDERSTOOD HIM TO SAY DOES NOT NEED CONGRESSIONAL APPROPRIATION. HIEN THEN ASSURED HOLBROOKE THAT HE WAS NOT PROPOSING CONCESSIONAL AID BUT ONLY WISHED TO MAKE THE POINT THAT NO MATTER WHAT FORM A DOLLAR OF AID TOOK IT WAS STILL A DOLLAR OF AID. HE THEN QUOTED LEONARD WOODCOCK AS SAYING THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS THE RIGHT TO DECIDE A NUMBER OF ISSUES WITHOUT CONSULTING WITH THE CONGRESS. HE THEN CALLED ON US TO EXAMINE ALL THESE POSSIBILITIES AND REASSURED US THAT THE SRV IS READY TO CREATE "FAVORABLE CONDITIONS" FOR OUR PROVIDING ANY ASSISTANCE.

7. IN AN OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO US STATEMENTS ABOUT WAR REPARATIONS, HIEN ELABORATED THAT THE SRV HAS NEVER USED THIS TERM. HE SAID THEY UNDERSTAND OUR DIFFICULTY WITH THIS AND THEREFORE HAVE ONLY SPOKEN OF A US CONTRIBUTION OF HEALING WAR WOUNDS AND OF RECONSTRUCTION OF VIETNAM.

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 102339

8. HIEN THEN TURNED TO SUBJECT OF A WRITTEN AGREEMENT AND STATED HIS BELIEF THAT AFTER WE HAVE HAD DISCUSSION AND REACHED AN ACCORD, ONE WOULD BE NEEDED BY THE NEXT SESSION.

9. HOLBROOKE EXPRESSED SYMPATHETIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE SUFFERING THAT THE WAR HAD CAUSED TO ALL THE PEOPLE OF VIETNAM AND NOTED THAT WOODCOCK AND OTHERS HAD STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE TO VIETNAM OF ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH THE US. HE NOTED THAT IN US SOCQMNOMIC RELATIONS INCLUDE BOTH THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS AND THAT OFTEN THE PRIVATE SECTOR IS MOST IMPORTANT. HOLBROOKE REITERATED OUR READINESS TO LIFT CURRENT RESTRICTIONS ON TRADE WHICH WILL MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR PRIVATE AMERICAN CAPITAL TO REACH VIETNAM, CALLING THIS AN IMPORTANT NEW POSITION OF THE USG. HE NOTED THAT IT WOULD DEFINITELY ASSIST IN POSTWAR RECONSTRUCTION.

10. HOLBROOKE THEN ALLUDED TO US CONTRIBUTIONS TO INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS WHICH INDIRECTLY BENEFIT VIETNAM AND CITED PRESIDENT CARTER'S SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS THAT THE US WOULD NO LONGER INTERPOSE OBJECTIONS TO SUCH ASSISTANCE. HE CHARACTERIZED THIS AS A UNILATERAL USG ACTION DESIGNED TO INDICATE THE NEW SPIRIT WITH WHICH WE APPROACH OUR BILATERAL TALKS. WHILE NOT HAVING AN EXACT FIGURE, HOLBROOKE EXPRESSED CERTAINTY THAT AMOUNT WAS IN THE TENS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS. HE NOTED FURTHER THAT THE US WILL INCREASE ITS SUPPORT TO THESE INSTITUTIONS AND CITED SPECIFIC EXAMPLE OF THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK WHICH IS DEVELOPING PROGRAMS FOR VIETNAM. EMPHASIZING THAT PRESENT SITUATION DOES NOT PERMIT A COMMITMENT OF DIRECT US AID, HOLBROOKE SUGGESTED THAT PROGRESS ON OTHER ISSUES MIGHT LEAD TO A CHANGE IN THIS SITUATION. HE THEN EXPLAINED THAT THIS MEANS IF OUR RELATIONS DEVELOP
SECRET

PAGE 06 STATE 102339

IN A SATISFACTORY WAY, IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO SEEK AGREEMENT OF CONGRESS TO REMOVE CURRENT RESTRICTIONS AND PERMIT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE.

11. TURNING TO QUESTION OF NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS, HOLBROOKE PICKED UP HIEN'S METAPHOR REGARDING TWO NEIGHBORS WHO HAVE QUARELED. NOTING THAT NOW THE TWO NEIGHBORS CAN ONLY DISCUSS THEIR DIFFERENCES WHEN THEY COME TO A "HOME" OF A THIRD PERSON, HE SUGGESTED THAT THEIR RELATIONS WOULD IMPROVE CONSIDERABLY IF EACH COULD TALK TO EACH OTHER ALL THE TIME AND NOT JUST ONCE IN AWHILE IN A VERY FORMAL SETTING. EXPLAINING THAT HIS OBVIOUS REFERENCE WAS TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF

EMBASSIES, HOLBROOKE THEN EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN THAT IF THE TWO NEIGHBORS DO NOT MOVE IN THIS DIRECTION, THEN THE HISTORICAL OPPORTUNITY NOW AVAILABLE COULD BE LOST. HOLBROOKE WARNED THAT IF WE CANNOT ESTABLISH EMBASSIES SOON, POPULAR AND CONGRESSIONAL REACTION IN THE US WOULD BE ADVERSE AND COULD SOLIDIFY EXISTING OBJECTIONS TO EVENTUAL AID. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD AUTHORIZED A VERY FORTHCOMING USG PROPOSAL WHICH CONTAINED SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL RISKS. SHOULD IT BE REBUFFED, IT WILL HAVE NOT ONLY A NEGATIVE EFFECT IN CONGRESS BUT WILL ALSO MAKE IT HARDER LATER ON.

12. HIEN THEN SUGGESTED A TEA BREAK, DURING WHICH HOLBROOKE TOLD HIEN THAT NOW WAS THE TIME FOR BOTH SIDES TO SEIZE THE INITIATIVE AND MOVE FORWARD. HE REEMPHASIZED THAT IF WE DID NOT MOVE FORWARD SOON, THERE WAS A REAL DANGER THAT POLITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES MIGHT CHANGE AND REDUCE POSSIBILITY OF MOVEMENT. HIEN RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT HE UNDERSTOOD WHAT HOLBROOKE MEANT, BUT HE NEEDED TO BE ABLE TO TELL HANOI WHAT KIND OF AID LEVELS THE PRESIDENT MIGHT BE WILLING TO AGREE TO AFTER NORMALIZATION. THIS FIGURE COULD BE COMMUNICATED TO THE VIETNAMESE IN SECRET, HIEN SAID, BUT SECRET

PAGE 07 STATE 102339

HE NEEDED A ROUGH IDEA. HOLBROOKE SAID THAT IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE FOR US TO GIVE A FIGURE IN SECRET, AS CONGRESS HAD TO BE INVOLVED IN ANY SUCH DISCUSSIONS.

13. TEA BREAK DISCUSSION THEN TURNED TO FUTURE TALKS. HIEN SAID HE WOULD PREFER TO GO TO MOSCOW TO SEE PHAM VAN DONG BEFORE WE MET AGAIN. HOLBROOKE AGREED TO ANOTHER MEETING IN ABOUT TWO WEEKS. HIEN SAID THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO SHOW SOME PROGRESS ON ALL FRONTS. HOLBROOKE SAID HE AGREED, BUT THAT WE COULD NOT GIVE ANY INDICATION OF MOVEMENT ON AID AT THIS TIME.

14. HOLBROOKE SPOKE FIRST FOLLOWING BREAK AND DESCRIBED STATUS OF THE TALKS AS THE US SIDE SAW IT UP TO THIS POINT. HE REITERATED THE US PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND EXCHANGE AMBASSADORS; SAID THE US WILL WELCOME SRV MEMBERSHIP IN THE US WHENEVER IT CHOSE TO APPLY; EXPRESSED OUR GRATITUDE AT SRV EFFORTS REGARDING MIAS AND NOTED THAT CONTINUED PROGRESS ON THIS MATTER IS AN ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT OF OUR RELATIONSHIP: STATED THAT THE TRADE EMBARGO WOULD BE LIFTED AS SOON AS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS ARE ESTABLISHED. HE THEN SAID THE US BELIEVES THAT IF THESE STEPS ARE TAKEN, IT WILL CREATE A MORE FAVORABLE CLIMATE AND THAT IF OUR RELATIONS DEVELOP IN A SATISFACTORY WAY IT MIGHT THEN BE POSSIBLE FOR THE US TO SEEK AGREEMENT WITH CONGRESS TO REMOVE CURRENT

RESTRICTIONS ON ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE.

15. HOLBROOKE THEN STATED US UNDERSTANDING OF SRV POSITION INCLUDING THAT SRV CONSIDERS ISSUES BETWEEN US TO BE THREE INTERRELATED MATTERS: MIAS, US RECONSTRUCTION AID AND NORMALIZATION. REGARDING MIAS, SRV INTENDS TO CONTINUE ITS EFFORTS AND EVEN GREATER SPEED WOULD BE POSSIBLE IF US ECONOMIC AID WERE FORTHCOMING. HOLBROOKE NOTED OUR RECEIVING LIST OF
SECRET

PAGE 08 STATE 102339

COMMODITIES AND RESOURCES WHICH VIETNAM WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE BUT ADDED THAT HIEN HAD NOT RESPONDED TO THE US PROPOSAL MADE THE PRIOR DAY THAT WE AGREE TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS.

16. HIEN REPLIED BY RESTATING HIS UNDERSTANDING OF SEVERAL POINTS THE US HAD MADE INCLUDING WHAT HE THOUGHT WAS US DECISION TO SEEK AGREEMENT OF CONGRESS TO REMOVE AID PROHIBITIONS AT SOME FUTURE DATE. HOLBROOKE TOOK CARE TO EMPHASIZE THAT HE HAD USED THE WORD "MIGHT" REGARDING POSSIBLE EXECUTIVE BRANCH APPROACHES TO CONGRESS ON THIS SUBJECT. HE THEN RESTATED PRESIDENT CARTER'S POSITION THAT HE (THE PRESIDENT) WOULD RESPOND WELL IF NORMAL DIPLOMATIC AND TRADE RELATIONS EVOLVE SATISFACTORILY. HOLBROOKE EXPLAINED THAT THIS MEANS THAT IF OUR RELATIONS DEVELOP IN A SATISFACTORY WAY "IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE FOR US TO SEEK AGREEMENT OF THE CONGRESS TO REMOVE CURRENT RESTRICTIONS." HOLBROOKE CAUTIONED THAT HE COULD NOT PROMISE THAT THIS WOULD HAPPEN, BUT ADDED THAT NORMALIZING RELATIONS WILL PROVIDE THE BEST AND POSSIBLY ONLY WAY FOR THIS TO OCCUR. HIEN INDICATED HE UNDERSTOOD HOLBROOKE'S POINT AND THE US POSITION. HIEN THEN ASKED THAT THE US ALSO RECALL THE SRV POSITION THAT WE SHOULD IMMEDIATELY END OUR TRADE EMBARGO.

17. DISCUSSION THEN TURNED TO PRESS ARRANGEMENTS AND EFFORTS WERE DEVOTED TO WORKING OUT A POSSIBLE JOINT PUBLIC STATEMENT. PRESS OFFICER MORT SMITH REMAINED BEHIND AFTER THE MEETING TO DISCUSS DETAILS OF IT WITH VIETNAMESE EMBASSY OFFICERS. ACTUAL STATEMENTS AND REPORT OF PRESS CONFERENCE SENT SEPTEL.

18. AT END OF THE DISCUSSION OF PRESS RELATIONS, HOLBROOKE ASKED HIEN WHAT SRV UNDERSTOOD NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS TO MEAN. HIEN REPLIED BY SAYING THAT SRV
SECRET

PAGE 09 STATE 102339

CONSIDERED ANNOUNCEMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS TO BE

NORMALIZATION WITH EXCHANGE OF AMBASSADORS BEING ONLY A TECHNICAL MATTER TO BE COMPLETED AFTERWARDS. HOLBROOKE REPLIED THAT USUAL US PRACTICE IS FOR ANNOUNCEMENT ALONG WITH EXCHANGE OF AMBASSADORS. HIEN RETORTED THAT AMBASSADORS ARE NOT IN PLACE WHEN ANNOUNCEMENTS ARE MADE AND THAT WHEN FORMAL PROCESS OF SEEKING AGREEMENT, APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT, PROCUREMENT OF EMBASSY AND HOUSING, WERE ALL STEPS WHICH HAD TO FOLLOW ANY ANNOUNCEMENT. THIS PROCESS INVOLVES TIME AND THEREFORE IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO HAVE AMBASSADORS EXCHANGED SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF ESTABLISHING OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

19. FOLLOWING THIS THE MEETING ADJOURNED WITH AGREEMENT TO MEET AGAIN IN APPROXIMATELY TWO WEEKS. GAMMONS UNQTE CHRISTOPHER

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